Orleans.[32] It certified that Lee Harvey Oswald had been vaccinated for smallpox on June 8, 1963. This, too, was a forgery. The signature of "A. J. Hideel" was in the handwriting of Lee Harvey Oswald.[28] There is no "Dr. Hidell" licensed to practice medicine in Louisiana.[30] There is no post office box 30061 in the New Orleans Post Office but Oswald had rented post office box 30061 in New Orleans[31] on June 3, 1963, listing Marina Oswald and A. J. Hidell as additional persons entitled to receive mail in the box.[32] The New Orleans postal authorities had not discarded the portion of the application listing the names of those, other than the owner of the box, entitled to receive mail through the box. Expert testimony confirmed that the writing on this application was that of Lee Harvey Oswald.[33]

Hidell's name on the post office box application was part of Oswald's use of a nonexistent Hidell to serve as president of the so-called New Orleans Chapter of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. (As discussed below in ch.VI, p. 292.) Marina Oswald testified that she first learned of Oswald's use of the fictitious name "Hidell" in connection with his pro-Castro activities in New Orleans.[34] According to her testimony, he compelled her to write the name "Hidell" on membership cards in the space designated for the signature of the "Chapter President."[35] The name "Hidell" was stamped on some of the "Chapter's" printed literature and on the membership application blanks.[36] Marina Oswald testified, "I knew there was no such organization. And I know Hidell is merely an altered Fidel, and I laughed at such foolishness."[37] Hidell was a fictitious president of an organization of which Oswald was the only member.[38]

When seeking employment in New Orleans, Oswald listed a "Sgt. Robt. Hidell" as a reference on one job application[39] and "George Hidell" as a reference on another.[40] Both names were found to be fictitious.[41] Moreover, the use of "Alek" as a first name for Hidell is a further link to Oswald because "Alek" was Oswald's nickname in Russia.[42] Letters received by Marina Oswald from her husband signed "Alek" were given to the Commission.[43]

Oswald's Palmprint on Rifle Barrel

Based on the above evidence, the Commission concluded that Oswald purchased the rifle found on the sixth floor of the Depository Building. Additional evidence of ownership was provided in the form of palmprint identification which indicated that Oswald had possession of the rifle he had purchased.

A few minutes after the rifle was discovered on the sixth floor of the Depository Building[44] it was examined by Lt. J. C. Day of the identification bureau of the Dallas police. He lifted the rifle by the wooden stock after his examination convinced him that the wood was too rough to take fingerprints. Capt. J. W. Fritz then ejected a cartridge by operating the bolt, but only after Day viewed the knob on the bolt through a magnifying glass and found no prints.[45] Day continued to examine the rifle with the magnifying glass, looking for

possible fingerprints. He applied fingerprint powder to the side of the metal housing near the trigger, and noticed traces of two prints.[46] At 11:45 p.m. on November 22, the rifle was released to the FBI and forwarded to Washington where it was examined on the morning of November 23 by Sebastian F. Latona, supervisor of the Latent Fingerprint Section of the FBI's Identification Division.[47]

In his testimony before the Commission, Latona stated that when he received the rifle, the area where prints were visible was protected by cellophane.[48] He examined these prints, as well as photographs of them which the Dallas police had made, and concluded that:

> * * * the formations, the ridge formations and characteristics, were insufficient for purposes of either effecting identification or a determination that the print was not identical with the prints of people. Accordingly, my opinion simply was that the latent prints which were there were of no value.[49]

Latona then processed the complete weapon but developed no identifiable prints.[50] He stated that the poor quality of the wood and the metal would cause the rifle to absorb moisture from the skin, thereby making a clear print unlikely.[51]

On November 22, however, before surrendering possession of the rifle to the FBI Laboratory, Lieutenant Day of the Dallas Police Department had "lifted" a palmprint from the underside of the gun barrel "near the firing end of the barrel about 3 inches under the woodstock when I took the woodstock loose."[52] "Lifting" a print involves the use of adhesive material to remove the fingerprint powder which adheres to the original print. In this way the powdered impression is actually removed from the object.[53] The lifting had been so complete in this case that there was no trace of the print on the rifle itself when it was examined by Latona. Nor was there any indication that the lift had been performed.[54] Day, on the other hand, believed that sufficient traces of the print had been left on the rifle barrel, because he did not release the lifted print until November 26, when he received instructions to send "everything that we had" to the FBI.[55] The print arrived in the FBI Laboratory in Washington on November 29, mounted on a card on which Lieutenant Day had written the words "off underside gun barrel near end of foregrip C2766."[56] The print's positive identity as having been lifted from the rifle was confirmed by FBI Laboratory tests which established that the adhesive material bearing the print also bore impressions of the same irregularities that appeared on the barrel of the rifle.[57]

Latona testified that this palmprint was the right palmprint of Lee Harvey Oswald.[58] At the request of the Commission, Arthur Mandella, fingerprint expert with the New York City Police Department, conducted an independent examination and also determined that this was the right palmprint of Oswald.[59] Latona's findings were also confirmed by Ronald G. Wittmus, another FBI fingerprint